



U.S. EMBASSY PRAGUE AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES NEWSLETTER

Trziste 15, 118 01 Prague 1

January/February 2014

We're Moving!

(But just across the hall.)

If you've visited us in the past, you are used to turning left at the top of the stairs. That is about to change.

Starting Monday, February 10th, ALL consular services will take place in the lower part of the Consular wing. For the time being, our hours will remain the same. Please be advised that all routine services require an appointment, which you can schedule online [here](#).

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Greetings from ACS

Štastný nový rok! I hope you had a happy and healthy holiday season.

As the new year begins, I would like to thank all of you for your support of the U.S. Embassy in Prague. We continue to be available to assist U.S. citizens living and visiting the Czech Republic.

Please take note of our new location in the lower wing of the Consular Section.

Best regards,

Charles Jess
Consul General

Recent Travel Alerts and Warnings



Travel Alerts (Short-Term) that pose a risk to U.S. citizens abroad:

- ♦ [Egypt](#) 12/18/2013
- ♦ [Madagascar](#) 12/12/2013
- ♦ [Bangladesh](#) 12/03/2013

Travel Warnings (Long-Term) that pose a risk to U.S. citizens abroad:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ♦ Republic of South Sudan 01/03/2014 | ♦ Eritrea 11/18/2013 |
| ♦ Honduras 12/24/2013 | ♦ Central African Republic 11/14/2013 |
| ♦ Libya 12/12/2013 | ♦ Congo, Democratic Republic of the 10/24/2013 |
| ♦ Venezuela 11/22/2013 | ♦ Sudan 10/11/2013 |
| ♦ Iran 11/21/2013 | ♦ Burundi 10/11/2013 |
| ♦ North Korea 11/19/2013 | ♦ Colombia 10/11/2013 |



Internet or Email scams: If you feel you have been a victim of an Internet scam, please send all reports of Internet fraud directly to the [Internet Crime Complaint Center \(IC3\)](#) - a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C). IC3 was established to receive internet related criminal complaints and to research, develop, and refer complaints to federal, state, local, or international law enforcement if appropriate.

If you've been the victim of an internet financial scam, please click [here](#) for more info.

The New Czech Citizenship Law and You

As of January 1st, 2014, the Czech Republic allows dual citizenship for Czech citizens. Applicants do NOT need to renounce any other citizenships, including American, but will be required to pass an exam that demonstrates knowledge of the constitutional system of the Czech Republic, as well as basic knowledge of Czech cultural, social, geographical and historical facts. Applicants will also be required to pass a language exam.

Your American citizenship will NOT be affected if you choose to apply for Czech citizenship as well.

In addition, the Czech Republic now recognizes the transmission of citizenship automatically by the father to his child. This can be done several ways:

- Birth to a Czech father and mother who is either an EU citizen or in correct legal status at the time of birth. The father **must** declare his parentage.
- Court order determining paternity.
- Confirmation of paternity through DNA testing.

For more information, please consult the Czech Ministry of Interior.

Embassy Holiday Closures

U.S. Embassy Prague will be closed on the following days in recognition of Czech and U.S. holidays:

Monday, January 20, 2014 - Martin Luther King Day (U.S. Holiday)

Monday, February 17, 2014 - Washington's Birthday (U.S. Holiday)

Monday, April 21, 2014 - Easter Monday (Czech Holiday)

Thursday, May 1, 2014 - Labor Day (Czech Holiday)

U.S. Visas for Same-Sex Spouses: FAQ

Q: How does the Supreme Court's Windsor v. United States decision impact immigration law?

A: The Supreme Court has found section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) unconstitutional. Effective immediately, U.S. embassies and consulates will adjudicate visa applications that are based on a same-sex marriage in the same way that we adjudicate applications for opposite gender spouses. This means that the same sex spouse of a visa applicant coming to the U.S. for any purpose – including work, study, international exchange or as a legal immigrant – will be eligible for a derivative visa. Likewise, stepchildren acquired through same sex marriages can also qualify as beneficiaries or for derivative status.

Q: Do we have to live or intend to live in a state in which same sex marriage is legal in order to qualify for an immigrant or nonimmigrant visa?

A: No. If your marriage is valid in the jurisdiction (U.S. state or foreign country) where it took place, it is valid for immigration purposes.

Q: I am in a civil union or domestic partnership; will this be treated the same as a marriage?

A: At this time, only a relationship legally considered to be a marriage in the jurisdiction where it took place establishes eligibility as a spouse for immigration purposes.

Q: I am a U.S. citizen who is engaged to be married to a foreign national of the same sex. We cannot marry in my fiancé's country. What are our options? Can we apply for a fiancé K visa?

A: You may file a Form I-129F and apply for a fiancé(e) (K) visa. As long as all other immigration requirements are met, a same-sex engagement may allow your fiancé to enter the United States for the purpose of marriage.

More information can be found on the [USCIS website](https://uscis.gov).

Need a criminal record check for your Czech visa or Živnostenský list?

Documentation on criminal record checks are provided by the Embassy through an affidavit signed by the U.S. citizen and notarized at the Embassy by a Consular Officer. Under certain circumstances, this sworn statement affirming that you have no criminal history is accepted by the Czech Government. Please confirm this requirement with the appropriate Czech Government office related to your needs. The fee for this notarial service is \$50.00 USD.

Appointments for routine services such as non-emergency passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, extra passport pages, and **notarial services** are available Monday through Friday between the hours of 0830 AM and 1130 AM. Appointments may be made online by visiting our reservation system at <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=PRG&appcode=1>

Please visit our website for additional information: <http://prague.usembassy.gov>.



Get the free Smart Traveler App!

The State Department's *Smart Traveler* app is now available for free:

--In the iTunes store at <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/smart-traveler/id442693988?mt=8>,

--From the Google Play Store at http://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.state.apps.smartravel&feature=search_result#?t=W10

The app was first launched in June 2011. It is the official State Department application for U.S. travelers. The app invites you to see the world with easy access to frequently updated official country information, travel alerts, travel warnings, maps, U.S. embassy locations, and more.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ “Know Before You Go” allows you to get travel warnings on that specific country or region, a map, safety & security information, and more.
- ◆ The "U.S. Relations Fact Sheet" gives you information on U.S. relations with that country.
- ◆ "U.S. Embassies/Consulates" is your one-stop shop for a complete list of all U.S. embassies & consulates overseas.
- ◆ Select “Smart Traveler Enrollment” from the bottom of the e-itineraries screen to enroll in this free program so that the State Department can better assist you in an emergency.

Stay Connected with
U.S. Embassy Prague



<http://www.facebook.com/USEmbassyPrague>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/usembassyprague>

<http://www.youtube.com/USEmbassyPrague>

<http://twitter.com/USEmbassyPrague>

Are U.S. citizens living abroad subject to the individual shared responsibility mandate in the Affordable Care Act?

Yes. However, U.S. citizens who are not physically present in the United States for at least 330 full days within a 12-month period are treated as having minimum essential coverage (MEC) for that 12-month period.

In addition, U.S. citizens who are bona fide residents of a foreign country (or countries) for an entire taxable year are treated as having minimum essential coverage for that year. In general, these are individuals who qualify for an exclusion from income under section 911 of the Internal Revenue Code, even if they do not use the exclusion for all of their foreign earned income because, for example, they are employees of the United States. See Publication 54, Tax Guide for U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad, for further information on the section 911 exclusion. They need take no further action to comply with the individual shared responsibility provision during those months. U.S. citizens who meet neither the physical presence nor residency requirements will need to maintain MEC, qualify for an exemption, or make a payment when filing their tax return for each month of the year that they do not have MEC.

For this purpose, MEC includes a group health plan provided by an overseas employer. One exemption that may be particularly relevant to U.S. citizens living abroad for a small part of a year is the exemption for a short coverage gap. This exemption provides that no payment will be due for a once-per-year gap in coverage that lasts less than three months.

More information regarding exemptions from the Affordable Care Act can be found online at <https://www.healthcare.gov/exemptions/>.

Contact American Citizen Services

ACSPRG@state.gov

Open 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM Monday through Friday

By appointment only (except for emergencies)

<http://prague.usembassy.gov>

420-257-022-000